

richer, how can you be unwilling to vote for a bill that might make us pay 12.5% more, but will take huge strides toward protecting the future of our planet and safeguarding against additional enormous energy costs in the future. Penny wise and pound foolish. What we should do is get to the bottom of exactly why prices have gone up 400% in eight years.

I feel angry that our society is willing to mortgage our future almost completely for slight increases in personal luxury and benefit in the present (consider the gas tax reprieve that [was] proposed this summer as one tiny example). Where are our values for providing for the future of our children and our planet? I believe we need to prioritize much greater efforts on green and renewable resource R&D. I believe that if we put our innovation behind solutions that the entire world needs, we can more than offset the up-front costs. This is the strength of capitalism and I believe we ought to focus on our strengths. I do not want us to emphasize further oil exploration and drilling and opening up of our protected public lands (such as ANWR).

SCOT, *Boise.*

P.S. Please have the courage and honesty to include critical comments like mine as well when you compile comments from the public. Thank you.

Our farm has been severely impacted by high energy prices and the price of corn, which is a by-product of the energy crisis. We have gone from 100 employees down to 34. We are currently liquidating our calves because we can no longer make money raising them. We will soon be down to 12 employees. We could hang on a little longer if Congress would do something about drilling in ANWR and Bakken. We need refineries! We need oil! Oil is 1000% more efficient than these "alternative" fuels and drilling and refining our own oil is proven to work, while these other fuels are not. There is too much energy used to make ethanol to make it efficient. I believe that the mere announcement of drilling and building refineries will drastically help our economy. Just think of the excitement of jobs. The excitement of better times to come. Anyone can hang on if they have hope. There are no downsides to drilling in our own country. Drilling is not environmentally hazardous and even if it was, people come first.

Please, please get this message out. Call news conferences with your fellow conservative Senators. Shout it from the rooftops. And for the sake of our economy and country's freedom, [support conservative efforts to govern].

ELIZABETH, *Kuna.*

You ask how the fuel prices are affecting us personally; it is very simple—in every way.

As fuel prices rise, food costs increase, the cost of every basic need jumps up, the distances to functions become critical, we all have to make choices about what is most important. Unfortunately, for many of us, our lives become a struggle to get the dollar to buy the foods to keep going, pay our property taxes for homes we cannot afford to sell, get the fuel to get us to the place to make that dollar which is worth less every day and employers cannot afford to pay more in wages and the cycle goes on and on.

Everyone says "Oh, let us just raise the minimum wage. That will fix it." Think again. The average small business man is one step away from sinking in this quicksand himself. He cannot afford health or dental insurance or retirement for him or his family, but he cannot have much of a business

without employees, either. So he gives a raise to his employees and has to cut somewhere else, quality or quantity of goods sold and then the purchaser suffers. It all affects every one of us.

Transportation, fuel costs, value of the dollar, energy costs, making ends meet becomes increasingly difficult and our situations look increasingly dismal. Our society, like it or not, is tied to the umbilical cord of fuel oil pricing and something needs to be done to remove the grip on that cord that is choking out the life-giving fluids our nation needs to function. We need to control our own supplies of energy, provide for ourselves everything this nation needs to not just survive, but to thrive. We have oil supplies of our own under our own soil and off our own coasts; use them. That is what they are there for. As you use them, develop new sources, require more renewable energy implementation, but use what you've got. Stop letting the nation get the life strangled out of it. Make renewable energy more affordable, for one thing. It was going to cost me over \$40,000 to put in a wind generator to power my home. That would never ever pay for itself before it self destructed. It is ridiculous to have solar power and wind power devices so overpriced to make them unattainable. They would help the economy. Subsidize alternative energy and educate people on ways to stretch their dollar before it is too late.

Things are bad everywhere, but if we do not do something very soon, it is going to get much worse. Overcrowded, underfed, unhappy people, unable to care for their loved ones, will turn angry, bitter, and dangerous after years of being taught "me first philosophy." We have created a monster and that monster drinks crude oil. You better keep feeding it.

JANELLE, *Hayden.*

Thanks for your interest in doing something about high gas prices. Here in Rexburg, I have found that at age 56, I can still ride a bike to work. I may even start doing groceries and other errands with my bike. I am getting in good shape, although I already was in good shape. My family and I find that we consolidate errands. Instead of going to town for one thing, we make sure it is for three or more things. If it is not, we just wait until we have more to do downtown or elsewhere. I have aging parents who need help, and gas prices have not made getting to their house very easy, but what we can do, we have to go. So we go without a lot of things. We pass by the treats and other not so important purchases (we were doing that before anyway). I think where this really hits us the hardest is in going to see our grandkids far away, or taking a simple trip like to Mt. Rushmore or even Yellowstone Park. The gas prices have eaten those options up pretty fast. It is too bad that we sit around as a nation and let the oil rich countries dictate to us how we can live our lives. We should have started doing something about these fifty years ago, but apparently, nobody had that much far sight into the potential problem. We'll survive and we do not feel bad for ourselves, but it is not easy.

FERRON.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO DEAN STONE

• Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, today marks the 84th birthday of Dean Stone, who has lived in my hometown of Maryville, TN, his entire life. This

year also marks the 125th anniversary of The Daily Times, Maryville's hometown newspaper where Dean has worked for the last half century.

I extend my warmest wishes to both of these Maryville institutions, and ask that a letter I wrote to Dean be printed in the RECORD.

The material follows.

SEPTEMBER 10, 2008.

Mr. DEAN STONE,
The Daily Times,
Maryville, Tennessee.

DEAR DEAN, It is an especially good idea to celebrate your birthday and that of The Daily Times all at once, because for me, and I am sure for most Blount Countians, it is hard to separate the two.

That was true when I was a Maryville High School student years ago and you hired me to contribute to the Times' school news page.

But it is even more true today because for the last half century I have so much enjoyed your photographs, your stories, and your opinions about Blount County. No one has ever done a better or more complete job of covering our families and communities.

Years from now, when anyone looks back to try to understand Blount County—its history, its people, and its mountains—the first place to go will be to a Dean Stone photograph of Cades Cove, or "Bits of stone" about some family, or a carefully reasoned editorial about why we should think now about what our county's landscape will look like later.

Happy birthday, Dean—and Maryville-Alcoa's The Daily Times—from a grateful former paperboy and school news correspondent.

Sincerely,

LAMAR ALEXANDER,
U.S. Senator.●

HEROES OF THE OREGON TRAIL FIRE

• Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, on August 25, 2008, Idahoans residing on the Boise bench in the area of the Oregon Trail and Columbia Village subdivisions experienced immense devastation caused by a brush fire that became a residential nightmare. With the combination of 50 m.p.h. winds, dry sage brush, high heat, sloped terrain and homes with cedar shake shingles and wooden decks, a small grassfire exploded, claiming the life of one woman, destroying 10 homes and causing extensive damage to nine others. Mary Ellen Ryder, a professor at Boise State University, beloved wife of Peter Ryder and a friend to the community, was the single fatality. My thoughts and prayers and those of many Idahoans are with the Ryder family.

Although the fire caused great devastation, many lives and homes were saved because of the efforts of several courageous Idahoans. I would like to formally recognize one homeowner, two Boise police officers, one firefighter and one local humanitarian. Without their selfless service and personal sacrifices of physical safety, expense and time away from families and careers, the outcome and aftermath of the fire would have been much harder to endure. Thanks to homeowner Kent